

Amendments to the Claims:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for collection and lateral flow chromatography of an oral fluid, the apparatus comprising:

- a capillary matrix having an exposed a surface for receiving oral fluid;
- a lateral flow chromatography strip where the lateral flow chromatography strip is in communication with the capillary matrix ~~such that when the capillary matrix receives oral fluid;~~ and
- a blocking strip coupled between the capillary matrix and the lateral flow chromatographic strip, wherein the blocking strip contains at least one blocking agent.

2-52. (Cancelled)

53. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the blocking strip further comprises a detergent, or a buffer, or mixtures thereof.

54. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 53, wherein at least one blocking agent is selected from bovine serum albumin, deoxycholate, and n-lauroyl sarcosine.

55. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a conjugate strip coupled between the ~~capillary matrix~~ blocking strip and the lateral flow chromatography strip, wherein the conjugate strip contains lateral flow chromatography reagents.

56. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 55, wherein the lateral flow chromatography strip provides assays to detect or quantify at least one analyte within the oral fluid.

57. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 56, wherein at least the analyte is selected from the group consisting of antibodies to HIV, antibodies to HTLV, antibodies to Helicobacter pylori, antibodies to hepatitis, antibodies to measles, antibodies to mumps,

antibodies to rubella, cotinine, cocaine, benzoylecgonine, benzodiazepine, tetrahydrocannabinol, nicotine, ethanol theophylline, phenytoin, acetaminophen, lithium, diazepam, nortryptiline, secobarbital, phenobarbital, theophylline, testosterone, estradiol, 17-hydroxyprogesterone, progesterone, thyroxine, thyroid stimulating hormone, follicle stimulating hormone, luteinizing hormone, transforming growth factor alpha, epidermal growth factor, insulin-like growth factor I and II, growth hormone release inhibiting factor, IGA and sex hormone binding globulin and other analytes including glucose, cholesterol, caffeine, cholesterol, corticosteroid binding globulin, PSA, or DHEA binding glycoprotein, or and combinations thereof.

58. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 57, wherein at least one analyte is ~~selected from the group consisting of antibodies~~ an antibody to HIV.

59. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 57, wherein at least one analyte is ~~selected from the group consisting of antibodies~~ an antibody to hepatitis.

60. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the lateral flow chromatography strip contains lateral flow chromatography reagents.

61. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the capillary matrix is paddle shaped.

62. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the capillary matrix has an average pore size ranging from about 40 μm to about 250 μm .

63. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a housing having a cavity in which the lateral flow chromatography strip is at least partially disposed.

64. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 63, wherein the housing includes at least one inspection site providing visual inspection of reagents at selected sites on the lateral flow chromatography strip.

65. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising:
a conjugate strip coupled between the ~~capillary matrix~~ blocking strip and the lateral flow chromatography strip and contains lateral flow chromatography reagents;

a housing having a cavity, wherein the lateral flow chromatography strip extends into the cavity along the housing to an inspection site on the housing; and

at least one inspection site from an exterior of the housing to the lateral chromatographic strip to enable visual inspection of reagents at selected sites on the lateral chromatographic strip.

66. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 65, wherein the capillary matrix protrudes from the housing is connected to the capillary matrix and is in communication with the lateral flow chromatography strip.

67. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for collection and lateral flow chromatography of an oral fluid, the apparatus comprising:

a collection pad of a capillary matrix having exposed a surface for receiving oral fluid;

a blocking pad coupled between the capillary matrix and the lateral flow chromatographic strip, wherein the blocking strip contains at least one blocking agent;

a conjugate pad coupled between ~~the capillary matrix~~ the blocking pad and the lateral flow chromatography strip, and wherein the conjugate pad contains lateral flow chromatography reagents;

a lateral flow chromatography strip where the lateral flow chromatography strip is in communication with capillary matrix ~~such that when the capillary matrix receives oral fluid;~~

a housing having a cavity, wherein the lateral flow chromatography strip extends into the cavity along the housing to an inspection site on the housing; and

at least one inspection site from an exterior of the housing to the lateral chromatographic strip to enable visual inspection of reagents at selected sites on the lateral chromatographic strip.

68. (Currently Amended) A kit for the detection of an analyte in an oral fluid comprising:

~~an~~ the apparatus of claim 1; and

a buffer, reagent, or detection reagent for collection and lateral flow chromatography of an oral fluid.

69. (Currently Amended) A kit for the detection of an analyte in an oral fluid comprising:

~~an~~ the apparatus of claim 67; and

a buffer, reagent, or detection reagent for collection and lateral flow chromatography of an oral fluid.